

Perspectives Page

EDITORIAL As Real As

As you have occasionally seen, from time to time, if perchance you happen to see this corner of the paper every week, a reference to the confined semi-reality of college would sometimes appear.

Whether it be directed to students, pointing out that this school is a business, and if that professor in the front of your classroom was as knowledgeable as this university purports, by acclaiming his teachability, then why isn't he out practicing in his field rather than teaching it?

Or, as is most often the case, directing the question of reality to the prof. The world is different out there. Are they aware of that? Perhaps they are and have chosen this confined semi-reality over the real reality.

The real reality?

The very next question a logical mind would ask is: "What is reality?" This is not too tough to answer. Even engineers can get away on this one without consulting a dictionary. [Actually I've nothing against engineers, I sometimes wonder, though, if we can't get along without all those bridges.] Something real is something that is not fictitious. It actually exists. The state of affairs that is. We all know about reality.

Thinking about this a new view of our surroundings at the Capitol Campus has been arrived at. It is real.

It is as real as you want to make it. You certainly pay tuition with real dollars. Dollars, the greenback are the very essence of reality. When you talk money people listen.

The people you deal with are real, this is, of course, according to your own perceptions. "I think, therefore, I am." You do some convincing here, you make a deal there, you relate to those around you. You come in contact with people every day. It's real. The people are real: the situation is real, although possibly not altogether practical.

If in defining yourself you say, "I am the total of all conscious and non-conscious events that I've ever experienced," then the Capitol Campus must be included in you, as part of you.

To claim that these two years, or however long you're going to be here, aren't part of you and have had no consequence in shaping you, is a nonsequitur.

It is hard to record. How much of this will you know in ten years? Will you know more in ten years than that person who got an "A" when you only "earned" a "C." Impossible to say.

Something does happen here, though. You come out different than when you first started. To say "no effect" is an effect in itself. Something does happen and it boils down to this. Your education is as real as you want to make it, and you get out what you put in.

Notable Quotes

A MADMAN'S MANUSCRIPT

"Yes! A madman's! How that word would have struck to my heart many years ago! How it would have roused the terror that used to come upon me sometimes, sending the blood hissing and tingling through my veins till the cold dew of fear stood in large drops upon my skin, and my knees knocked together with fright! I like it now, though. It's a fine name. Show me the monarch whose angry frown was ever feared like the glare of a madman's eye—whose cord and axe were ever half so sure as a madman's gripe. Ho! Ho! It's a grand thing to be mad! To be peeped at like a wild lion through the iron bars—to gnash one's teeth and howl, through the long still night, to the merry ring of a heavy chain—and to roll and twine among the straw, transported with such brave music. Hurrah for the madhouse! Oh, it's a rare place!

Pickwick Papers - Charles Dickens

Capitol Campus Reader
of the Pennsylvania State University
The Capitol Campus
RTE. 230, Middletown, Pa., 17057
Office W-129-131
Phone (717) 944-4970

Editor-in-Chief.....William M. Kane
Assistant Editor.....Tim Adams
Associate Editor.....Ed Perrone
Copy Editor.....Robert L. Fisher Jr.
Advertising Manager.....Wayne Stottmeister
Business Manager.....Carol Andress

Staff.....Grace M. Cole, Doug George, Greg Hall, Young Inyang, Ray Martin, Brian McDonough.

Typesetters.....John Kollar, Ed McKeown
Perspectives Logo.....Jenine M. Rannels
Hot Lion Sketch.....Beth Kopas

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No Accusations, Comments and Questions

By Young Inyang

Twenty days ago, about 200 out of the over 2,500 students of the Capitol Campus participated in an election to select the members of the 1977-78 student government.

The members have been selected, they are settling down to 'business' and the few who cared to participate in the election have returned to business as usual. To the majority who did not, could not, or would not participate, it doesn't matter anyway.

Like the voice in the wilderness I have shouted, I am still shouting review the constitution, overhaul the electoral process, get involved. As John's voice was heard then, mine is not heard now. How can it be heard when the SGA is enclosed by sound-proof walls; how can I be heard when over 90% of the student body do not care what goes on within those walls; who would hear me if the faculty, in the name of separation or delegation of powers, would not, perhaps, until or unless the activities within the walls threaten to rock the boat.

In order to deal "effectively with matters of students' affairs; to perpetuate the best traditions and ideals of the Capitol Campus..." a constitution was established for the SGA. Among the wide range of powers granted to the SGA president, by the constitution, are "all other powers which would generally appertain to this office." Thus the president is not only granted unlimited and undefined powers, but is implicitly granted the power to define "what would generally appertain to this office." How have the presidents used these powers? Have they used them at all? No one cares to find out until someone threatens to introduce guns to the Campus. Should they have such powers? No! We dare not ask lest we make enemies for ourselves.

The Treasurer, according to the constitution, among other duties, "shall present to the senate and pose in a conspicuous place, at the end of each term, financial reports of all activities of the SGA." I apologize if I had missed them but for the three terms I have been here, I do not remember seeing any such reports. The ambiguity of Article XVIII has been a source of conflict between the SGA and other student organizations, and yet for technical reasons, it could not appear in the last elections.

Article XI of the constitution establishes ten Standing Committees including the Election/Screening Committee. It would require at least 59 persons to fill these committees. Except for the appointment of the chairpersons, there is no place, in the constitution, where the method of selecting the members is clearly speci-

fied. Is this the "other power that would generally appertain to this office" of the president? As a matter of public record, would someone please say how, when, by whom, and on what basis these members are selected? Are they selected through guidelines outside the SGA constitution? If so, why?

The Election/Screening Committee is required by the constitution to "review all candidates for general and special elections, verify the authenticity of all candidates for office; and to conduct the electoral process." Could the committee come out saying, as a matter for public record and scrutiny, how it reviewed the candidates for the last elections? Could the committee place on record, for public scrutiny, who the polling officers were and how they were selected? Could the Election/Screening committee tell the public why it ordered the ballot boxes removed "very temporarily" and have the counting started three hours before the elections closed? The Chief Justice of the Student Court said this was done in order to be able to announce the election results during the casino games that night. Sincerely, could the Election - Screening committee confirm that it was led to commit such a fundamental flaw for such frivolous reasons?

Article 2 section 1 of the constitution states that "All full-time undergraduate and graduate students shall be members of this organization (SGA)." Section two of the same article states that "only members of this organization shall be entitled to the privilege of suffrage in student elections. Again, under voting qualifications (Article XIII section 3) of the constitution states that "All full-time undergraduate and graduate students of the Capitol Campus...are eligible to vote in any elections of the SGA." During the last elections part-time students voted. I challenged it. The Chief Justice said I raised a technical point, but ruled that the constitution was not violated. Before his ruling, he asked other members of the panel what they thought the original authors might have meant: "Did they mean to exclude part-time students?"

While I do not support any rule that discriminates against part-time students, it is hard to understand how the court arrived at the conclusion it did. The Vagueness Doctrine and its application to University rules states that "Whenever the government (SGA) seeks through the imposition of sanctions (restrictions) to place restraints (conditions) on individual freedoms (suffrage) it must avoid using language so vague that men of common intelligence must necessarily guess at its meaning and differ

as to its application." The learned Chief Justice could not therefore, have invoked the Vagueness Doctrine in his interpretation. There was nothing to interpret.

In wanting to know what the original authors of the constitutions might have meant, Michael Burke, the learned Chief Justice, was very unfairly invoking the doctrine of legislative intent. It could not be known two years later what the original authors might have meant. It can not be accepted, without debate, that a constitutional committee being a composite body can have a single state of mind or intention. We can only be guided by the words they wrote. The words they wrote were as clear as daylight. The phrase 'full-time' is an adjectival phrase that limits the use of the main noun 'students.' I have taken the time to check with authorities of the English language and Constitutional Law, both agree that Mike Burke was wrong in interpreting the article as including part-time students. But he has ruled. His decision is final and according to the Director of Students Affairs, there is nothing I can do.

One would have hoped that in looking for guidelines with which to interpret the constitution, the learned Chief Justice, Burke, would need go no further than other sections of the same constitution, but "No! I have the power to interpret the constitution (no one challenged that power) and according to my interpretation,....."

When I was challenging the election, I was not expecting to win any points. The Chief Justice, who was the Chairman of the hearing committee, was the supervisor of the election I challenged. He admitted making public statements to the effect that he "would be unwilling to sit and recount the votes." He knew his decision on the issue was final. I would have been naive to expect him to rule against an election he supervised, and was "unwilling to recount."

My participation in, and challenge of the election have revealed to me if not to others the built-in cliquish mechanisms of the organization, which "perpetuates the best traditions and ideals of the Capitol Campus..."; the built-in immunity of its officials from any meaningful form of surveillance, criticism, challenge by, or accountability to the powerless. The SGA has been dealing effectively with matters of students' affairs; has been perpetuating the best traditions and ideals of the campus; has been promoting to the end that work of this institution may be made of lasting value to the University; and has been